DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 344 160 CG 024 153

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TITLE A Longitudinal Study of Career and Family Values in College Students.
PUB DATE 5 Apr 92
NOTE 24p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association (63rd, Boston, MA, April 3-5, 1992).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Career Choice; College Freshmen; College Graduates; College Seniors; *Family Attitudes; Higher Education; *Self Concept; Sex Role; *Values; *Work Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS *Career Values; *Family Values

ABSTRACT

The impact of the college experience and the impact of being in the workplace on family and career values need to be addressed. This study examined instrumental and expressive self-concepts and career and family values of college students during and after completion of college. In 1988, 97 first-year college students and 121 college seniors completed the Role Values Inventory, which assesses career and family values, and the Bem Sex-Role Inventory. Students also answered a number of demographic questions regarding degree program, career goals, plans for a few years after college graduation, and plans for 10 years after graduation. Information pertaining to subjects' parents' occupation and education levels also were obtained. In 1991, a second phase of data collection was completed in which these two measures along with a 14-item attitude scale of men's and women's roles in American society were administered to 74 members of the original freshman class and to 82 members of the original senior class. An examination of changes in career and family scores for the 156 subjects who participated in both phases of the longitudinal study revealed a significant increase in Family Value subscale scores from 1988 to 1991 across gender, sex-role, and class year. Career Value subscale scores remained constant over the same 3-year period. (NB)

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A LONGITUDINAL STUDY OF CAREER AND FAMILY VALUES IN COLLEGE STUDENTS.

Shawn L. Ward

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This study examined instrumental and expressive self-concepts and career and family values of college students during and after completing college. In 1988, 97 first-year students and 121 seniors completed (1) the Role Values Inventory, which assesses career and family values and (2) the Bem Sex-Role Inventory. In 1991, a second phase of data collection was completed consisting of these two measures and a 14-item attitude scale of men's and women's roles in our society. A contrast is drawn between the college experience and being in the workplace as both impact on career and family values.

Presented at the Sixty-third Annual meeting of the Eastern Psychological Association, Boston, MA, April 5, 1992.

CG024153

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A Longitudinal Study of Career and Family Values in College Students.

With increasing dual career families, smaller family size, and the delay in starting a family, the traditional divisions of labor in our culture have drawn attention. The once clear distinction between instrumental (independent, self-reliant) and expressive roles (nurturance), as they relate to career and family decisions, has become less so, especially when correlated with gender. As women and men struggle to have it all, researchers have attempted to identify factors relevant to these decisions.

Some success has been found in measuring these roles by using the Role Value Inventory (Rubin, Ward & Basow, 1988; Ward & Rubin, 1989). Attempts have been made to extend this research into the domain of the real world by correlating these roles with scenarios that reflect different aspects of the career and family decision making process (Ward, Del Genio & Gorey, 1991). This investigation continues the effort to validate these role values with career and family decisions. The impact of the college experience and the impact of being in the workplace needs to be addressed. In this study, students were followed over a three year period to explore the ramifications of the college experience and the work experience on career and family values.

Method

In the spring of 1988, volunteers were recruited from the first-year and the senior classes. Ninety seven members of the class of 1991 and 121 members of the class of 1988, all traditional college age students, participated in phase one of this project.

At this time of measurement, the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) and the Role Value Inventory were administered. The BSRI (Bem, 1974) was used to classify the sex role within this sample. The sex-role distribution for each class level are presented in Figures 1 and 2.

The Role Value Inventory was adapted from the Career Motivation and Achievement Planning Counseling Form (Farmer, 1983) and consists of Career Value and Family Value subscales (see Appendix). The Career Value subscale consists of 11 items and the Family Value subscale consists of 8 items. Item responses are based on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

Subjects were also asked several demographic questions regarding degree program, career goal, plans for a few years after college graduation and ten years after graduation. Information pertaining to subjects' parent's occupation and education level completed were also obtained.

Three years later during the 1990-91 academic year, all 218 original subjects were contacted by mail to participate in phase two of the project. Members of the class of 1991 were invited to complete the materials in the psychology lab on campus, 74 members of the class of 1991 or 76% responded. Participants from the class of 1988 were sent the necessary questionnaires and 82 members of the class of 1988 or 68% returned complete packets of materials. During this phase, all participants were offered monetary remuneration for their effort. The sex-role distribution for each class level at this second time of measurement can also be found in Figures 1 and 2.

Along with the Role Value Inventory and BSRI, at the second time of measurement participants also responded to 14 new statements, both positive and negative, focusing on the roles of men and women in our society (see Appendix). These statements were introduced to examine further the reliability and validity of the Role Value Inventory. The demographic questions described above were included also, note that all questions were altered appropriately for the second data collection to reflect the changed status of each class year.

All data collections completed on campus were done in groups ranging in size from 4 to 20. The order of presentation of the BSRI, the Role Value Inventory and the 14-item questionnaire was counterbalanced across all subjects. The demographic questionnaire was always presented last.

Results

Career and family subscale mean scores from the Role Value Inventory for each time of measurement are found in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. Separate analyses of variance were conducted for the two subscales. In 1988, there was a significant main effect for sex-role on the Career Value subscale, $F(3,202) = 4.75$, $p < .01$. Across both class levels and gender, a career was more valued by the androgynous sex-types ($M = 4.89$) than by the feminine sex-types ($M = 4.63$). No other comparisons were statistically significant and there were no significant findings for the Family Value subscale.

In 1991, there was a significant class year by sex-role interaction for the Career Value subscale, $F(3,155) = 4.50$, $p < .01$. This is illustrated in Figure 3. Further analysis revealed that masculine seniors ($M = 5.11$) who were about to enter the

workforce valued a career more than their masculine counterparts (M = 4.50) who have been in the workforce for the past three years. The masculine seniors were also found to value a career more than the feminine seniors and those identified as undifferentiated from the class of 1988.

Again from the 1991 date, the ANOVA for the Family Value subscale revealed a significant sex-role main effect, $F(3,155) = 7.14$, $p < .001$. Across both class levels, the feminine sex-types (M = 4.95) valued a family more than both the masculine sex-types (M = 4.41) and the androgynous sex-types (M = 4.55).

When examining the changes in career and family scores for the 156 subjects who participated in this longitudinal study, there was a significant increase in Family Value subscale scores from 1988 to 1991 across gender, sex-role and class year. Career Value subscale scores were found to remain constant over the same three year period.

Last year at the Eastern Psychological Association meetings, I introduced a classification based on a discrepancy score established by comparing career and family value subscale scores (Ward, Del Genio, & Gorey, 1991). Students were classified as career oriented if their career subscale score was one standard deviation higher than their family subscale score and those who indicated the reverse pattern, family greater than career, were identified as family oriented.

Using this classification system, 99 of the original 218 students (45%) were identified as career oriented and family oriented. The same classification was used on the second phase of data collection and 74 of the 156 (47%) were identified. The sex-role distribution for these students is shown in Figure 4. For each sex-role distribution

by class year, time of measurement and orientation identification, a 2 X 4 chi-square analysis was completed. The only significant difference was found in the class of 1991 distribution during the second phase of the project. Career oriented students were more likely to be masculine and androgynous while Family oriented students were more likely to be feminine.

The responses given to the 14-item opinion questionnaire were examined for differences based on this classification scheme as well as class year, gender and sex-role. Mean scores for each statement are presented in Tables 3 and 4. Table 3 contains the mean scores by orientation and Table 4 presents any sex differences to these statements. I would like to draw your attention to several interesting findings among these comparisons.

Starting with the third statement, "A women's place is in the home," there was a significant gender by sex-role interaction, $F(3,73) = 3.39$, $p < .02$. Women classified as masculine and androgynous disagreed more with this opinion than their male counterparts. This is further supported by those individuals identified as career oriented who also disagreed more strongly than those family oriented.

Statement seven asks if women are capable of maintaining a career and running a household. There was a significant gender by class year interaction, $F(1,73) = 4.79$, $p < .01$. Women in both class years and men who have been in the workforce believe in this statement, males who were about to graduate reported a rather neutral response ($M = 4.58$), neither supporting or disagreeing with this statement.

For statement eleven there was a significant class year by sex-role interaction. Masculine and feminine members of the class of 1988 agreed that women were more suited for homemaking and child care than classmates identified as androgynous and agreed more than masculine and feminine members of the class of 1991. Those classified as family oriented agreed more that those career oriented.

Finally, statement thirteen speaks to the importance for women to be involved and have a career in the work place. There was a gender by discrepancy score interaction, $F(1,73) = 3.90$, $p < .05$. Female career oriented students across both class years believe in this more than male career oriented and female family oriented students. This is further supported in the discrepancy main effect, career oriented greater than family oriented. It is also worth noting that members of the class of 1991 (6.00) also found this more important than the class of 1988 (5.48).

Discussion

This study hoped to extend the earlier research on the topic in two distinct areas. There is a real need to explore how college students make career and family decisions, given this is perhaps the most important decision they face. Along with measuring the career and family values and gender-types of these students, this research hoped to discover other social factors that may be involved in this decision making process. Research examining sex roles has challenged the traditional gender stereotypes associated with careers and the family. An examination of instrumental and expressive self-concepts and career and family values in both men and women is warranted. There are numerous factors that impact on making career and family decisions. This study

hoped to explore how career and family values play a part in that decision. It is also recognized that the college experience shapes those values. This longitudinal investigation hoped to clarify how a college experience compares with that of the workplace of the real world.

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Table 1.

Mean scores (standard deviations) for Career Subscale Scores of the Role Value Inventory by Sex-role and Gender at Times 1 and 2[a].

Time 1

Class				
1988	Masculine	Feminine	Androgynous	Undifferent
Females	4.87 (0.52)	4.71 (0.67)	4.91 (0.58)	4.80 (0.48)
Males	4.67 (0.48)	4.04 (0.69)	4.92 (0.55)	4.62 (0.23)
Total	4.75 (0.50)	4.64 (0.69)	4.91 (0.56)	4.72 (0.38)
1991				
Females	5.12 (0.47)	4.63 (0.62)	4.86 (0.43)	4.70 (0.67)
Males	5.02 (0.37)	4.62 (0.54)	4.86 (0.35)	4.81 (0.41)
Total	5.06 (0.40)	4.63 (0.59)	4.86 (0.39)	4.75 (0.54)

Time 2

1988				
Females	4.71 (0.56)	4.73 (0.49)	4.83 (0.47)	4.39 (0.65)
Males	4.34 (0.69)	4.60 (0.45)	4.99 (0.55)	4.81 (0.55)
Total	4.50 (0.65)	4.71 (0.48)	4.91 (0.50)	4.55 (0.62)
1991				
Females	5.31 (0.43)	4.59 (0.55)	4.82 (0.41)	4.68 (0.80
Males	5.03 (0.34)	4.36 (0.24)	4.84 (0.39)	4.94 (0.45)
Total	5.11 (0.38)	4.56 (0.51)	4.83 (0.40)	4.80 (0.65)

[a]Scores can range from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree).

Table 2.

Mean scores (standard deviations) for Family Subscale Scores of the Role Value Inventory by Sex-role and Gender at Times 1 and 2[a].

Time 1

Class				
1988	Masculine	Feminine	Androgynous	Undifferent
Females	4.50 (0.52)	4.74 (0.71)	4.83 (0.65)	4.45 (0.64)
Males	4.69 (0.49)	4.69 (0.37)	4.72 (0.53)	4.73 (0.52)
Total	4.61 (0.51)	4.73 (0.68)	4.78 (0.59)	4.58 (0.58)
1991				
Females	4.30 (0.57)	4.82 (0.64)	4.60 (0.62)	4.55 (0.56)
Males	4.83 (0.52)	5.00 (0.96)	4.76 (0.37)	4.70 (0.43)
Total	4.65 (0.59)	4.85 (0.69)	4.67 (0.52)	4.62 (0.49)

Time 2

1988				
Females	4.46 (0.63)	4.95 (0.45)	4.16 (0.66)	4.74 (0.71)
Males	4.13 (0.76)	4.28 (0.80)	4.83 (0.53)	4.59 (0.27)
Total	4.28 (0.71)	4.88 (0.52)	4.44 (0.69)	4.68 (0.57)
1991				
Females	4.20 (0.67)	4.97 (0.53)	4.64 (0.62)	4.75 (0.60)
Males	4.71 (0.54)	5.50 (0.94)	4.65 (0.45)	4.65 (0.55)
Total	4.55 (0.61)	5.05 (0.61)	4.64 (0.55)	4.70 (0.55)

[a]Scores can range from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree).

Table 3.

Means (standard deviations) for Fourteen-item Opinion Poll by Career and Family Orientation[a].

	Career Orient	Family Orient
Women are a valuable resource in the work place.	6.58 (0.90)	6.45 (0.76)
Men should be the primary breadwinner in the family.	2.06 (1.36)	3.32 (1.90)[b]
A woman's place is in the home.	1.37 (0.90)	2.22 (1.38)[b]
It is important that men always act emotionally strong.	2.69 (1.80)	2.41 (1.28)[b]
It is unfair for a company to invest its money and resources into hiring and training a woman for a position, when she is going to leave anyway to raise a family.	1.55 (0.95)	2.12 (1.38)
A man should always be President of the United States to convey an image of strength and leadership.	1.76 (1.30)	2.22 (1.62)[b]
A woman is capable of effectively maintaining a career and running a household.	6.06 (1.26)	5.09 (1.73)[b]
In general, men are more capable leaders.	2.09 (1.37)	2.90 (1.97)[b]
It is important for women to be at home to take care of the children.	3.16 (1.58)	4.80 (1.53)[b]
It is best for men not to cry in public.	2.62 (1.61)	2.70 (1.53)
Most women are more naturally suited for homemaking and child care responsibilities.	3.18 (1.66)	4.35 (1.70)[b]
It is important that men share in child care responsibilities.	6.60 (0.90)	6.67 (0.54)
It is important for women to be involved and have a career in the work place.	6.02 (1.12)	5.32 (1.30)[b]
Women are more naturally suited to fill work place positions that require managerial and leadership skills.	4.00 (1.81)	3.74 (1.61)

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[a]Scores can range from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree).
[b]Significant at the $p < .01$ level.

Table 4.

Means (standard deviations) for Fourteen-item Opinion Poll by Sex[a].

	Female	Male
Women are a valuable resource in the work place.	6.72 (0.60)	6.12 (1.11)[b]
Men should be the primary breadwinner in the family.	2.36 (1.67)	3.32 (1.74)
A woman's place is in the home.	1.50 (1.01)	2.21 (1.41)[b]
It is important that men always act emotionally strong.	2.69 (1.20)	3.66 (1.80)[b]
It is unfair for a company to invest its money and resources into hiring and training a woman for a position, when she is going to leave anyway to raise a family.	1.56 (1.09)	2.29 (1.23)[b]
A man should always be President of the United States to convey an image of strength and leadership.	1.58 (1.16)	2.75 (1.70)[b]
A woman is capable of effectively maintaining a career and running a household.	5.90 (1.31)	5.16 (1.88)[b]
In general, men are more capable leaders.	2.22 (1.66)	2.87 (1.67)
It is important for women to be at home to take care of the children.	3.70 (1.79)	4.16 (1.65)
It is best for men not to cry in public.	2.36 (1.50)	3.29 (1.54)[b]
Most women are more naturally suited for homemaking and child care responsibilities.	3.56 (1.85)	3.91 (1.58)
It is important that men share in child care responsibilities.	6.76 (0.55)	6.37 (1.05)[b]
It is important for women to be involved and have a career in the work place.	5.88 (1.22)	5.41 (1.24)
Women are more naturally suited to fill work place positions that require managerial and leadership skills.	4.10 (1.74)	3.45 (1.64)

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[a]Scores can range from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 7 (Strongly agree).

[b]Significant at the $p < .01$ level.

FIGURE 1.

Sex-Role Distribution for the Class of 1988

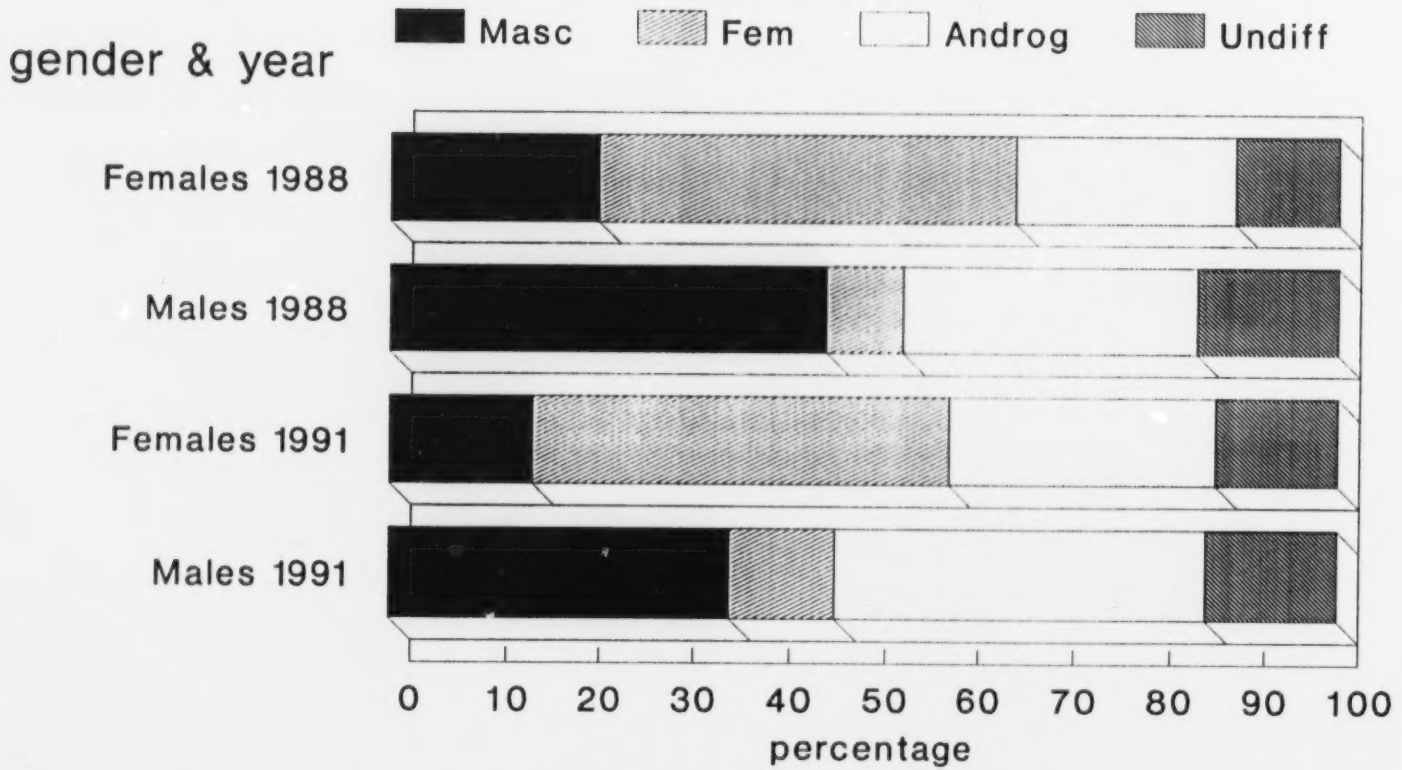

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FIGURE 2.

Sex-Role Distribution for the Class of 1991

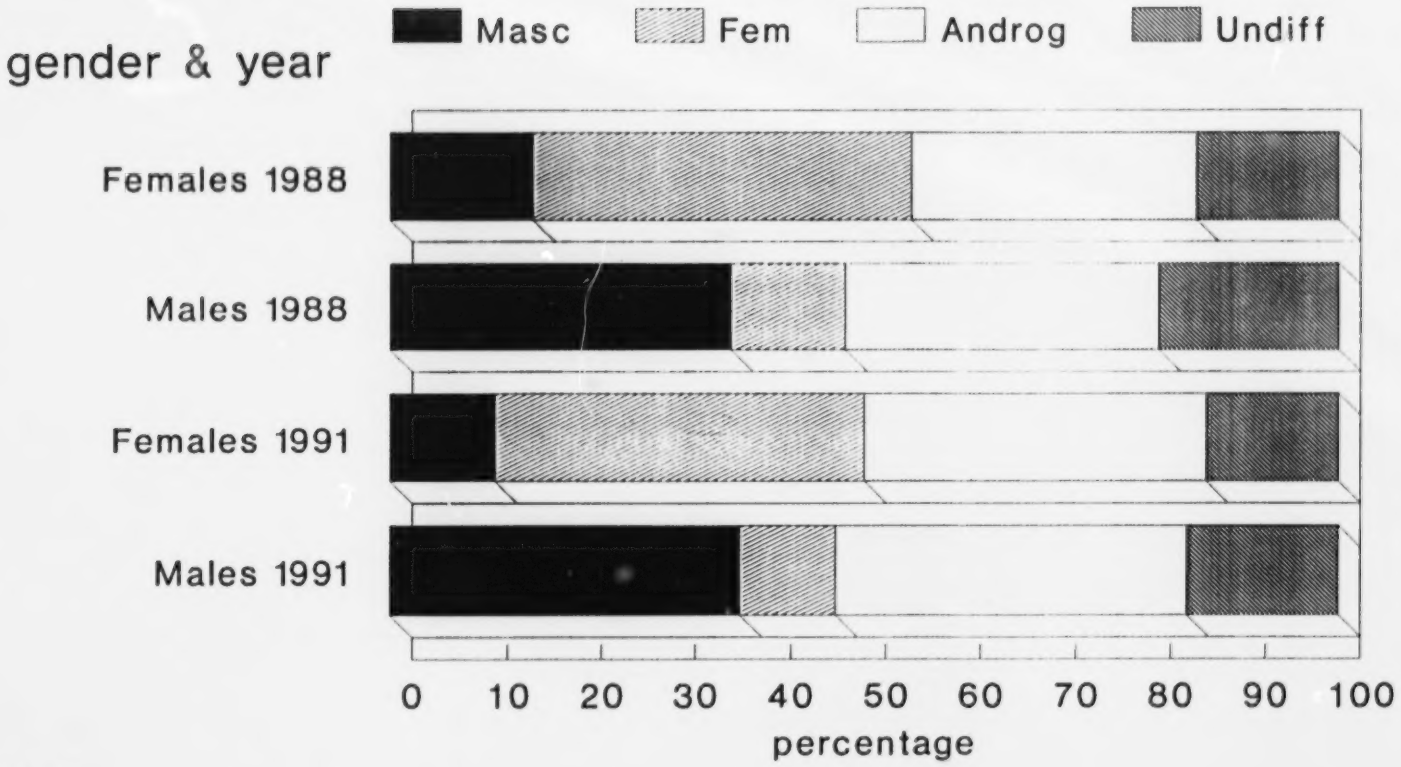

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FIGURE 3.

Career Value Scores by Year and Sex-Role at Time Two

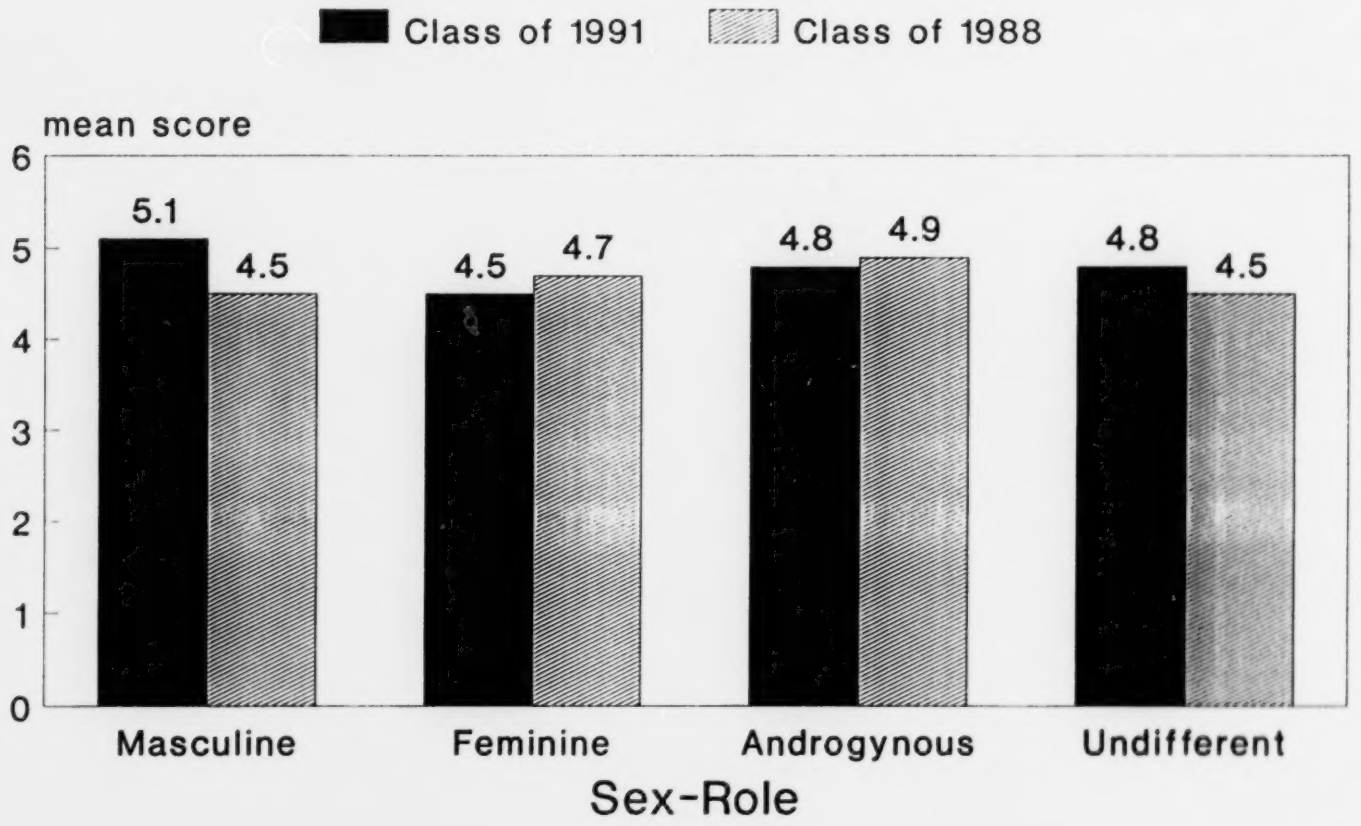

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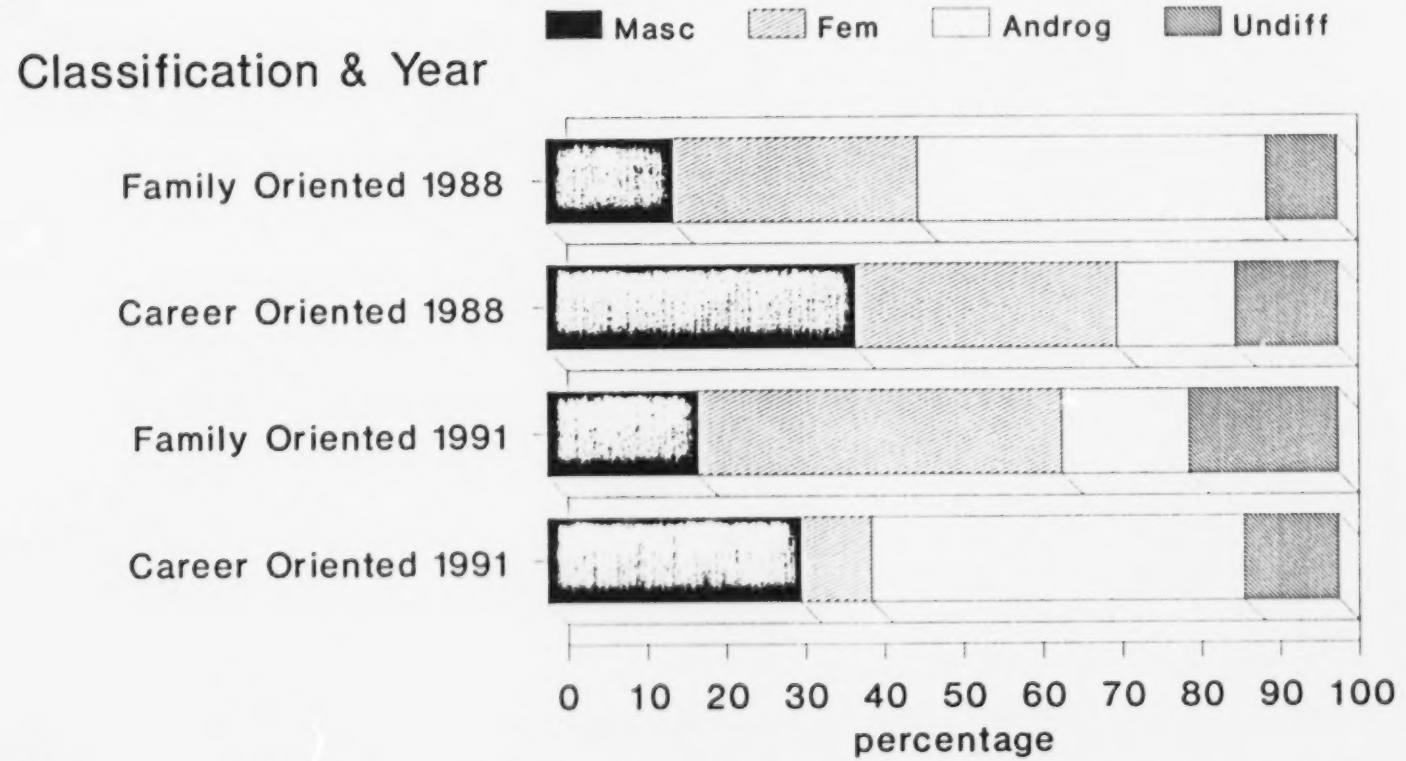
FIGURE 4.

Sex-Role Distribution for the Career and Family Oriented



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APPENDIX A.

ROLE VALUE INVENTORY

Please read each statement carefully then circle the number which corresponds to your answer

	Strongly Disagree			Not Sure			Strongly Agree
I would like my job to be a source of pride.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would prefer not to have other people (e.g. Day Care, relatives) care for my children when my children are of preschool age.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
To me, marriage and family are as important and as satisfying as a career.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
My career will provide a focus for my life.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would never let my career take priority over my family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I like to have a career goal which I can work toward.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is important for me to plan for my future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I were forced to choose, I would rather have a career than a family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I do not need a career in order to be happy.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If I were married and working, I would prefer not to have children.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I often consider what will be my future occupation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is not worthwhile to plan for a specific career.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is important for me to have a meaningful occupation.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
If it were economically feasible, I would be satisfied to devote full time to my family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I will express myself through my work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I would prefer to pursue my career without the demands of marriage and children.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I am a career-minded person.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I consider marriage and having a family as very important.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Succeeding in a career is my main concern.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Note: Family Subscale in italics

APPENDIX B.

FOURTEEN-ITEM OPINION POLL

Please read each statement carefully then circle the number which corresponds to your answer

	Strongly Disagree			Not Sure			Strongly Agree
Women are a valuable resource in the work place.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Men should be the primary breadwinner in the family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A woman's place is in the home.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is important that men always act emotionally strong.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is unfair for a company to invest its money and resources into hiring and training a woman for a position, when she is going to leave anyway to raise a family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A man should always be President of the United States to convey an image of strength and leadership.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
A woman is capable of effectively maintaining a career and running a household.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
In general, men are more capable leaders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is important for women to be at home to take care of the children.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is best for men not to cry in public.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Most women are more naturally suited for homemaking and child care responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is important that men share in child care responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
It is important for women to be involved and have a career in the work place.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Women are more naturally suited to fill work place positions that require managerial and leadership skills.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Note: Items about men in italics